GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:312
ANSWERED ON:13.08.2001
PRESERVATION OF HOLY RIVERS IN SOUTHERN PENINSULA
K. MURALEEDHARAN;RAMESH CHENNITHALA

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government have taken steps to preserve the rivers in the Southern Peninsula which have great religiousimportance including the Holy River Pampa;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Travancore Devaswom Board of Kerala has submitted a proposal for the approval of 100 hectares of forest land for the development and provision of basic amenities for devotees in Subrimala; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and the decision taken thereon?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT & FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) to (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement referred to in reply to Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 312 to be answered on Monday, the 13.8.2001

(a) & (b) The Central Government under the National River Conservation Plan is concerned with the conservation of rivers in the country including those in the Southern Peninsula. An outline proposal of pollution abatement of river Pamba at an estimated cost of Rs. 155 crore has been received from the Government of Kerala with a request to release funds for preparing a Pre-feasibility Report on the project only at this stage. It has been decided to release an amount of Rs.3 lakhs for this purpose to the State Government.

(c) & (d) Government of Kerala has submitted a proposal for diversion of 20 hectares of forest land for creating facilities for pilgrims visiting Sabrimala. Out of the 20 hectares land proposed for diversion, 15 hectares formed part of the Periyar Tiger Reserve. However, Government has allowed diversion of 0.42 hectares of forest land for sewage treatment plant and 0.20 hectares for water augmentation facility only within the Tiger Reserve as these activities are in consonance with the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972. Government has also permitted temporary use of 5 hectares of forest land outside the Tiger Reserve Area for parking facilities. The State Government has been advised to submit a revised proposal for creating additional facilities for pilgrims at Sabrimala outside the Tiger Reserve.